



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Grand Teton National Park
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Yellowstone/Grand Teton News Release

Temporary Winter Use Plans Environmental Assessment Released for Public Review

The Temporary Winter Use Plans Environment Assessment for Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks and the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway and the draft Finding of No Significant Impact will be released for a 30-day public review Friday, August 20, 2004.

The environmental assessment contains five alternatives. The preferred alternative provides for a wide range of appropriate winter recreational opportunities including strictly limited and regulated snowmobile use while carrying out the National Park Service's mission to protect the natural and cultural resources of the three parks.

Specifically, the preferred alternative would allow 720 snowmobiles per day in Yellowstone led by commercial guides. This is below the historic use levels in the park and is somewhat lower than the level of access allowed during the last half of the 2003-2004 winter season. Commercial guides would not be required for the 140 snowmobiles per day allowed in Grand Teton National Park.

Under the preferred alternative, snowmobiles operating in Yellowstone would be allowed only on roads prepared for snowmobile use, which accounts for less than one-percent of the park. All snowmobiles entering the parks would be required to be four-stroke machines that meet the cleaner, quieter "Best Available Technology" standards.

Operating under a temporary winter use management plan for up to three years would give visitors, employees and residents of the park's gateway communities the information they want and need to plan for the near term. This would minimize economic impacts on gateway communities. It would also provide the National Park Service the opportunity to gather additional, real-time data to be used preparing permanent regulations for winter use in the parks.

The Temporary Winter Use Plans Environment Assessment and the draft Finding of No Significant Impact are available for review online at <http://www.nps.gov/yell/winteruse-ea/>. Printed copies may be requested by calling Yellowstone National Park at (307) 344-2013. Comments can be submitted using an online form found at the above web address or by mail to Temporary Winter Use Plans EA, Yellowstone National Park, P.O. Box 168, Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190. Comments must be received by midnight on September 20, 2004.

A proposed rule guiding winter use for an interim period will be published in the *Federal Register* by early-September. It will have a separate review period and comment process.

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